20th CENTURY STUDIOS

PREDATOR

VER

BLACK PANTHER

LEDKILLA

PERCY | FERGUSON | HILL
TRINDADE | ARCINIEGA

IN ASSOCIATION WITH MARVEL

PREDATOR

VERSUS

BLACK PANTHER

PREDATOR VERSUS BLACK PANTHER

For centuries, the **YAUTJA** have stalked the inhabitants of Earth. A sentient, humanoid, extraterrestrial species, they are known for **HUNTING** other dangerous creatures for honor and sport. Capable of **INTERSTELLAR TRAVEL** via starships, they come from a planet with an atmosphere similar to that of Earth's, but their **TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENT** far outstrips that of humans. Using a combination of this advanced technology, including **CLOAKING SYSTEMS** and **PLASMACASTERS**, and basic weapons, such as spears, blades, and nets, the Yautja traditionally claim a trophy from their prey. It takes a remarkable human to outmatch the…

PREDATOR

Since the dawn of time, the African nation of **WAKANDA** has repelled would-be conquerors and experienced unchecked cultural evolution. The result: a high-tech, resource-rich, ecologically sound paradise hidden from the rest of the world. Their most valuable resource is **VIBRANIUM**, a rare metallic ore with energy-manipulation properties, which the Wakandans use to create their superior technology. Ruling over all of this is **KING T'CHALLA**. With his innate physical and mental skills enhanced by the mystical heart-shaped herb and the blessings of the goddess Bast, he is Wakanda's greatest defender known as the…

BLACK PANTHER

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LEDKILLA

WOLF STAR SYSTEM.

THE PLANET WAS ONE OF THOSE RARE TREASURES OF THE GALAXY:

HOST TO AN ATMOSPHERE--AND ABUNDANT LIFE.

TWO RIVAL CLANS HAD BEEN GIVEN AN OPPORTUNITY TO CLAIM IT AS THEIR OWN EXCLUSIVE HUNTING GROUNDS.

EACH WAS LED BY A BROTHER...

...WHO HOPED TO MAKE THEIR FATHER PROUD.

THIS KING HAD NEVER CONSIDERED HIS SONS EQUALS.

ONE HAD THE STRENGTH OF AN ENTIRE HUNTING PARTY.

THE OTHER WAS BORN SMALL AND MISSING A LEG.

IT WAS HE WHO HAD DEMANDED THE OPPORTUNITY TO CLAIM THE HUNTING GROUNDS FOR HIMSELF.

THE KING HAD A ***WEAPON*** THAT NEVER PARTED HIS SIDE.

A SPEAR THAT WAS ALSO A PRIZED HUNTING TROPHY.

IT ABSORBED AND EXPELLED ***KINETIC ENERGY.***

FWISH

THE FATHER'S FAVOR HAD ALWAYS BEEN IMPLIED.

BUT IN THIS CASE-- WITH THE LOAN OF THE SPEAR--HE MADE HIS POSITION ENTIRELY CLEAR.

THE ONE-LEGGED SON HAD DEMANDED THIS HUNT...

...A HUNT THAT WOULD RESULT IN THE DEATH OF ONE BROTHER OR THE OTHER.

HONOR WAS AT STAKE.

AND PERHAPS THE FUTURE OF THE THRONE.

THE BLOOD SPORT LASTED THROUGH MANY ROTATIONS OF THE SUN.

AT FIRST, THEY PICKED EACH OTHER OFF BY HUNTING WITH STEALTH.

BUT IN THE END, THE OLDER BROTHER'S CLAN, WON BECAUSE OF THE RARE, SPECIAL POWER OF THE SPEAR.

THE DAMNED SPEAR.

CHOOM

HIS FATHER HAD COLLECTED IT DURING ONE OF THE GREATEST HUNTS OF HIS LIFE.

THIS HAPPENED MANY YEARS AGO WHEN HE STAGED A MONTH-LONG HUNT ON EARTH.

HE BROUGHT HOME MANY SKULLS AND MANY TROPHIES, BUT THIS SPEAR...

...CONTAINED POWER LIKE NO OTHER IN THEIR ARSENAL.

IT WAS MADE OF SOMETHING THE YAUTJA CALLED GODMETAL...

...AND THE PEOPLE OF EARTH CALLED *VIBRANIUM.*

WHILE IT IS TRUE THAT THE YOUNGER BROTHER HAD ASKED FOR THIS BLOOD HUNT...

...HE HAD FELT IT WAS HIS ONLY CHOICE.

BECAUSE TO LIVE IN HIS BROTHER'S SHADOW AND HIS FATHER'S DISDAIN...

...WAS TO LIVE IN DISHONOR.

THIS HAD BEEN HIS CHANCE TO PROVE HIMSELF AS STRONGER AND WORTHIER, DESPITE HIS DISADVANTAGES.

IN HIS FAILURE, HE COULD HAVE CLAIMED HONOR TO HIS NAME AND CLAN...IF HE HAD DIED IN BATTLE.

BUT HIS BROTHER CHOSE INSTEAD TO HUMILIATE HIM--STRIPPING HIM OF HIS WEAPONS, TYING HIM TO A TOTEM, ABANDONING HIM IN DISGUST.

HE, A TRUE YAUTJA, WOULD NOT ALLOW HIMSELF TO DIE IN SUCH A STATE.

HE, A TRUE YAUTJA, UNDERSTOOD THAT STRENGTH CAME IN MANY FORMS.

HIS BROTHER HAD ALWAYS HAD THE ADVANTAGE OF SIZE AND MOBILITY.

SO HE HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO BE SMARTER.

HE HAD INTEGRATED TECH INTO HIS BODY...

...TO MAKE HIMSELF MORE FORMIDABLE.

SNIK

SUBCUTANEOUS WRIST BLADES WERE ONE ADVANTAGE OF MANY.

WAKANDA.

TODAY'S MANEUVER COMES WITH A PRIZE AND A COST.

THE LOSERS WILL TAKE OVER THE WINNER'S PALACE DUTIES. FOR A MONTH.

WHOEVER TAGS THE ***BLACK PANTHER*** FIRST WINS.

BUT ANYONE WHO IS TAGGED BY OUR KING WILL BE REMOVED FROM THE FIELD AND RETURNED TO THE SHIP.

PSSH. ONE MAN--EVEN ***HIM***--IS NO MATCH FOR THE ***HATUT ZERAZE.***

MIND YOUR TONGUE, SOLDIER! THE ***DORA MILAJE*** KNOW THAT THIS IS NOT ***ONE MAN.***

THE PANTHER IS THE LIVING MANIFESTATION OF THE WILL AND DETERMINATION OF EVERY WAKANDAN.

IF YOU BELIEVE HE COULD FAIL, THEN YOU BELIEVE THE SAME OF OUR KINGDOM.

DON'T LISTEN TO OKOYE.

ONE OF US IS GOING TO ENJOY A MONTH WITHOUT PERIMETER DUTY.

SWISH

?

WHAT IS IT? GENERAL?

PROOF THAT I WAS RIGHT.

THE PANTHER IS ON THE HUNT!

I'LL GIVE YOU CREDIT FOR THIS--

--YOU LASTED LONGER THAN THE WAR DOGS.

OKOYE, MY FINEST COMMANDER AND OLD FRIEND. DO YOU NEED A CUP OF COFFEE BEFORE WE GET STARTED? YOU SEEM TIRED.

SAYS THE MAN WHO NEEDS A ***VIBRANIUM*** SUIT OF ARMOR TO BEST ME!

OH, BUT I HEAR THAT THE ***BLACK PANTHER*** IS ***MORE THAN A MAN...***

YOU HEARD THAT? I WAS LYING THEN.

DON'T WORRY, OLD FRIEND. I WON'T TELL ANYONE...

I MEAN, EXCEPT FOR THE GOVERNING COUNCIL... AND, OF COURSE, MY MOTH---?

MY ARMOR-- IT'S BEEN HACKED!

SHURI!

MAKE YOUR MOVE, OKOYE.

MY BROTHER DESERVES TO BE HUMBLED.

HE SHOULD KNOW HOW IT FEELS TO BE NAKED OF ARMOR.

MAYBE THEN HE'D BE MORE OPEN TO SHARING WAKANDA'S RESOURCES WITH THE WORLD.

DAY AFTER DAY, YOU'RE BOTHERING ME ABOUT THIS. IT'S ANNOYING AND EMBARRASSING.

NGH!

I HAVE SAID IT SO MANY TIMES BEFORE. AS DID OUR FATHER. AS DID *HIS* FATHER.

TO SHARE OUR RESOURCES WITH THE WORLD IS A GOOD-HEARTED IMPULSE...BUT WE WILL ***MAKE OURSELVES VULNERABLE. A TARGET.***

WHAT GOOD IS STRENGTH IF YOU ONLY USE IT FOR YOURSELF?

HOW CAN WE STAND BY WHEN SO MANY SUFFER?

WE CANNOT RISK IT.

I WILL ADMIT YOU ARE SMARTER THAN ME, SISTER, BUT THAT DOES NOT MEAN YOU ARE WISER.

UH-HUH. LET ME SHOW YOU SOMETHING. OUTSIDE OF ALL YOUR ROYAL POSTURING.

PLEASE, ***T'CHALLA.***

OUTSIDE THE FOOTHILLS OF WAKANDA'S CAPITAL, BIRNIN ZANA.

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

IF YOU CAN KEEP UP--AND AVOID THE QUICKSAND--I WILL SHOW YOU.

HOW MUCH FARTHER?

WHAT'S THE MATTER? ALL THAT TIME SITTING ON THE THRONE MAKING YOUR LEGS SOFT?

WE ALL KNOW THAT I AM NOT JUST THE SMARTER, BUT ALSO THE STRONGER CHILD.

SLOW DOWN, SHURI.

EVERYTHING FOR YOU IS TOO FAST AND--

KRK

@#$%!

WHEN YOU MOVE FAST, YOU ARE MORE LIKELY TO STUMBLE.

I WOULD HAVE BEEN FINE.

BUT YOU'RE A GOOD BROTHER, EVEN IF YOU'RE WRONG-HEADED.

BAST BE PRAISED. WHAT IS THIS PLACE?

NOT BAD, EH?

IT IS BEAUTIFUL.

IT IS.

BUT IT IS MORE THAN THAT.

IT IS A HOLY PLACE WHERE MANY CURRENTS FLOW TOGETHER.

MAJI KINA IS A SEER FROM THE RIVER TRIBE.

AND HE BRINGS THE NEWS OF THE WATER.

WOLF STAR SYSTEM.

THE YOUNGER YAUTJA COULDN'T STOP THINKING ABOUT THE VIBRANIUM SPEAR.

THE AIR HAD SHAKEN WHEN IT RELEASED ITS ENERGY. HIS VERY MARROW AND GUTS FELT BRUISED.

HE IMAGINED A HELMET MADE OF THE SAME MATERIAL.

BODY ARMOR. A WRIST GAUNTLET. A LEG.

HE COULD BUILD HIMSELF INTO THE ULTIMATE PREDATOR.

WHEN THE YAUTJA PUT ON THEIR HELMETS, THEIR VISUAL INTELLIGENCE IS HEIGHTENED.

HE FOUND THIS REASSURING.

THE BODY WAS NOT ENOUGH. NOT JUST FOR HIM--FOR ALL OF THEM.

HE COULD BECOME THEIR SUPERIOR, SO LONG AS HE CONCENTRATED ON EVOLVING AS A WEAPON.

WHILE IT WAS TRUE THAT HE--AND WHAT REMAINED OF HIS CLAN--HAD BEEN DEEPLY HUMILIATED...

...THERE WAS STILL A CHANCE TO SHOW HIS WORTH.

THEY HAD BEEN UNFAIRLY DISADVANTAGED.

THEIR LOSS WAS NOT AN HONEST ONE.

AS SOON AS HE UNDERSTOOD HIS FATHER WAS MANEUVERING AGAINST HIM...

...HE HAD ARRANGED FOR A BACKUP PLAN.

HE HAD HIDDEN A SHIP...

...BELOW A LAKE.

THEY WOULD TRAVEL TO EARTH.

THEY WOULD HUNT DOWN THE SOURCE OF VIBRANIUM.

AND THEY WOULD KILL ANY WHO STOOD IN THEIR WAY.

ALL ARCHIVED DATA MADE IT CLEAR THAT VIBRANIUM WAS NOT PART OF THE NATIVE GEOLOGIC RECORD.

SO HE EMPLOYED AN ENERGY SCAN.

HIS HELMET HAD COLLECTED THE KINETIC SIGNATURE OF THE METAL WHEN HE WAS ATTACKED.

HE SOUGHT OUT SIMILAR FREQUENCIES.

THERE WERE BLIPS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, INCLUDING IN NEW YORK AND OFF THE COAST OF CENTRAL AMERICA.

BUT AFRICA WAS THE EPICENTER...

...THE MOTHER LODE...

...AND IT WAS HERE HE DISCOVERED AN ENERGY DOME WITH CLOAKING TECHNOLOGY SIMILAR TO THE YAUTJA'S OWN.

ONLY THIS WASN'T MEANT TO CAMOUFLAGE A BODY OR A SHIP.

IT WAS MEANT TO HIDE A *NATION.*

THE SHIELD WAS STRONGER THAN THE YAUTJA'S WEAPONS.

BUT IT WASN'T SMARTER THAN THEIR ALGORITHMS.

THEY HACKED THROUGH THE PERIMETER--THE GREATEST DEFENSE SYSTEM ON EARTH--LIKE A BLADE THROUGH FLESH.

SHOW MY BROTHER WHAT YOU HAVE SEEN, MAJI.

ALL WATER CONNECTS TO OTHER WATER, JUST AS ALL BLOOD CONNECTS TO OTHER BLOOD.

HUMANS ARE ONE TRIBE, AND MANY ARE SUFFERING.

FIVE HUNDRED MILES TO OUR NORTH, A YEARLONG DROUGHT AND HIGH WINDS HAVE CREATED A PERFECT STORM FOR A RAGING GRASSLAND FIRE.

ONE THOUSAND MILES TO OUR EAST, A NEW VIRUS IS MAKING PEOPLE COUGH THEIR LUNGS OUT.

AND THAT IS JUST THE BEGINNING OF WHAT I SEE IN THE WATER.

WAR. POVERTY. FAMINE. DISEASE. DROUGHT.

THEY *NEED* OUR HELP.

WHAT WOULD YOU SUGGEST?

WE SEND ENVOYS AND AID. OBVIOUSLY.

BUT THAT'S A SHORT-TERM SOLUTION.

WE SHOULD BE BUILDING HOSPITALS, UNIVERSITIES, A VIBRANIUM POWER GRID, A KINETIC RAILWAY TO CONNECT--

VIBRANIUM IS NOT A SHAREABLE RESOURCE.

I AM FAR FROM HEARTLESS, SHURI. I JUST NEED US TO BE CAREFUL.

I AM MORE THAN A KING--I AM A *PROTECTOR.*

LET US HELP, BUT IN OUR OWN WAY.

WE'LL ARRANGE SEVERAL ANONYMOUS DONATIONS TO--

NO!

YOU ACT AS THOUGH, BY OPENING THE DAM, THE CURRENT WILL SHIFT AND CONTAMINATE OUR GOOD SPRINGS.

BUT THINK OF IT THIS WAY INSTEAD--IF WE HELP OTHERS, THEN OTHERS ARE LIKELY TO HELP US.

WAKANDA NEEDS NO HELP.

SPLISH SPLISH SPLISH

KA KA KA KAKAKAKA KAKAKAKA

T'CHALLA? WHAT IS IT?

HIS SUIT. THE BLACK PANTHER SUIT.

VIBRANIUM WAS WOVEN INTO IT.

THE YAUTJA IMAGINED IT AS A TROPHY HE COULD CALL HIS OWN.

HE INSTRUCTED TWO OF HIS PARTY TO CONTINUE THEIR SURVEY OF WAKANDA...

...TO LOCATE THE SOURCE OF VIBRANIUM.

BUT THE OTHERS SHOULD JOIN HIM.

THEY WERE GOING HUNTING.

T'CHALLA?

KA KA KA

KA KA KA

KAKAKAKA

KAKAKAKA

THE BIRDS...

SOMETHING IS WRONG.

YES, SOMETHING IS WRONG. SOMETHING IS VERY, VERY WRONG.

AND WE NEED TO--

GET THE ELDER TO SAFETY. WE WILL SPEAK OF THIS LATER.

T'CHALLA?! WE'RE NOT DONE TALKING!

SPOOSH

"OKOYE?"

YES, MY KING?

"I NEED YOU TO JOIN ME FOR ANOTHER MANEUVER-- BUT THIS TIME, THE STAKES ARE REAL."

WHAT IS WRONG?

I'M NOT ENTIRELY CERTAIN YET.

BUT I BELIEVE SOMETHING MIGHT BE HERE.

SHSSSHH

I CANNOT HEAR YOU, MY KING.

SHSSSHHH

OKOYE? *OKOYE?* ARE THE COMMS DOWN?

...OR JAMMED?

BROKEN-NECKED.

IT WAS AS IF YOU HIT A WINDOW AT FULL FLIGHT, LITTLE ONE...

A WINDOW IN THE SKY.

WHAT HAS COME TO MY KINGDOM?

CLAWS

THE VIBRANIUM WEAVE SAVED HIM FROM DEATH.

BUT THE FORCE OF THE IMPACT DULLED HIS BRAIN.

UGH!

KRAK

THAK

HE FELL IN CONCUSSED DARKNESS.

SPLT

AND THE COLD MUD OF THE SWAMP SWALLOWED HIM UP.

SPLK

THE PANTHER HAD BEEN TAGGED AFTER ALL.

NOT BY THE DORA MILAJE OR THE HATUT ZERAZE...

...BUT BY THESE PREDATORS.

THE WAKANDAN DESIGN GROUP.

"AREN'T YOU WORRIED, SHURI, ABOUT WHAT YOUR BROTHER WILL DO?"

IT'S WHAT HE *DOESN'T* DO THAT CONCERNS ME.

THIS IS THE LAST OF IT, PRINCESS.

IT'S AS YOU SAID, MAJI.

WE'RE ALL CONNECTED.

WE'RE STRONGER TOGETHER.

WE'RE WEAKER APART.

WE *WILL* OPEN UP OUR DOORS AND SHARE WAKANDA'S RESOURCES.

CONTROL, THIS IS SHURI.

APPROACHING THE PERIMETER OF THE DOME.

REQUESTING ACCESS.

SHURI, THIS IS CONTROL.

YOUR SHIP IS APPROVED FOR EXIT STATUS AND--

HRK!

WHAT WAS THAT YOU WERE SAYING, CONTROL? OVER?

HEL--
HAK--HELP--
HRK--

CONTROL? WHAT DID YOU SAY?

THE YAUTJA HAD HEARD HER VOICE BEFORE.

"IF WE HELP OTHERS, THEN OTHERS ARE LIKELY TO HELP US."

THE HUNTING PARTY DID NOT WANT ANY OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE.

LOCKING DOWN THE PERIMETER WOULD SERVE THEM IN THAT REGARD...

...AND IN ANOTHER.

SOMETHING'S WRONG.

I'M TURNING AROUND.

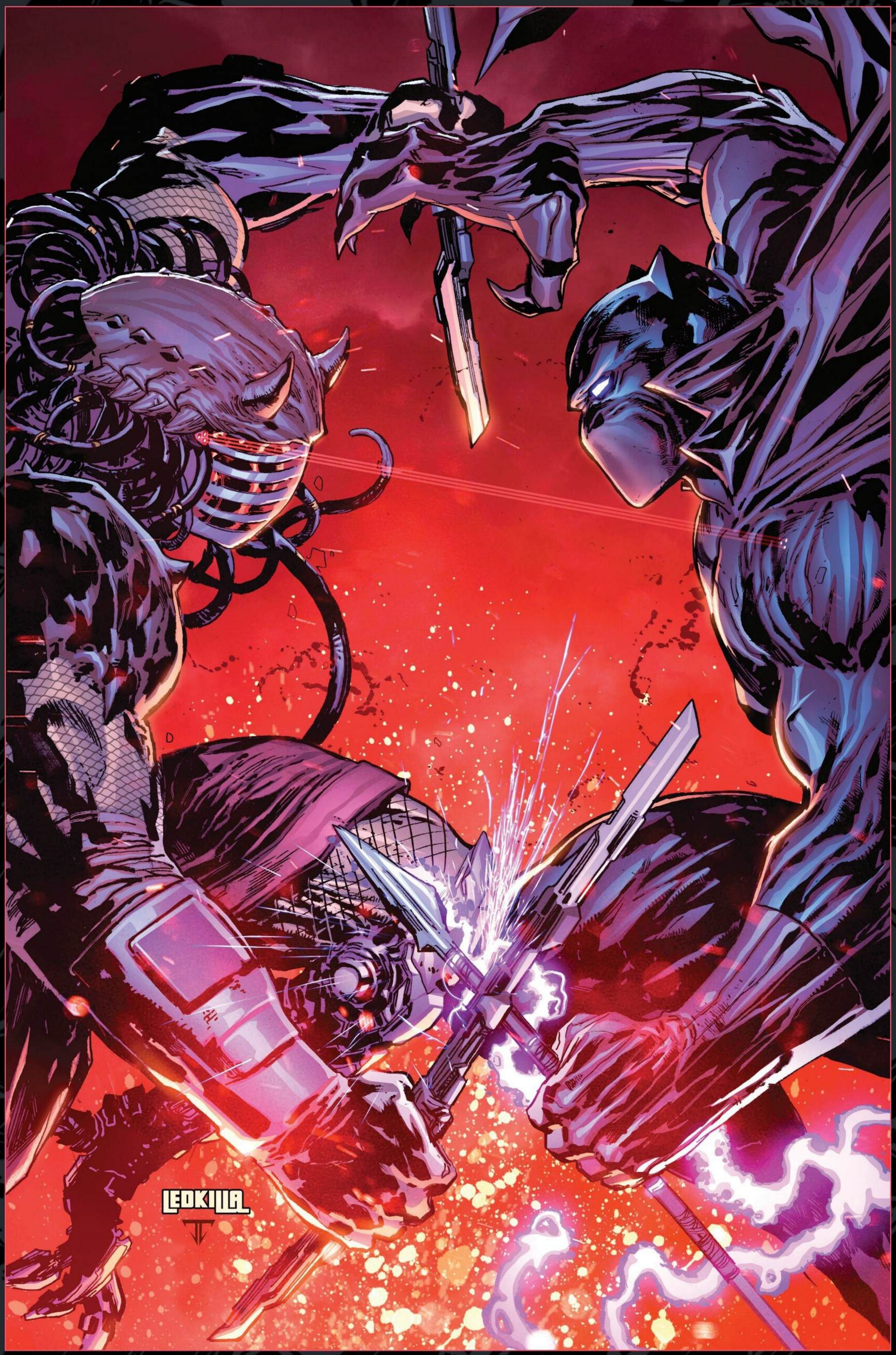
CONTROL, THIS IS SHURI.

I'M APPROACHING RE-ENT--

KUNCH

THE DOME WOULD NOW KEEP EVERYONE IN AS WELL AS OUT...

...AND SERVE AS ITS OWN *HUNTING PRESERVE.*


LEDKILLA

WAKANDA.
OUTSIDE BIRNIN ZANA.

ALL COMMS WERE DOWN.

THE LAST THING OKOYE HEARD FROM HER KING...

...WAS THAT THE DORA MILAJE SHOULD COME TO HIS AID.

SHE DID NOT KNOW WHAT WAS WRONG...

...BUT THE URGENCY IN HIS VOICE SCARED HER.

GENERAL OKOYE, WHAT ARE WE--?

SHH!

SHE WAS A GREAT WARRIOR NOT ONLY BECAUSE OF HER STRENGTH BUT ALSO HER AWARENESS.

SHE KNEW EVERYTHING AROUND HER AS IF HER NERVES EXTENDED INTO THE VINES OF THE JUNGLE.

SHE SAW...

...THE PYTHON CURLING AROUND A BRANCH.

SHE HEARD...

...THE RUSTY CHIRRUP OF THE CLAWED FROG.

SHE SMELLED...

...THE BURBLING POCKETS OF METHANE.

SHE CLOCKED A THOUSAND OTHER OBSERVATIONS IN THE SPACE OF A FEW SECONDS...

...BUT IT WAS THE *LACK* OF A CERTAIN SENSORY DETAIL THAT NARROWED HER ATTENTION.

THE BIRDS IN THE CANOPY WERE SILENT.

NALA.

WHERE IS SHE?

EYES UP.

DORA MILAJE.

CLUSTER TOGETHER, BACK TO BACK.

BLIP

SHHHHHHH

BLUNT ENDS OF YOUR SPEARS-- UP!

FIRE ELECTRICAL DISCHARGE-- NOW!

FOOM

KREEEE!

DOOSH

YAAAA!

SHAK

WHATEVER THAT THING IS...

...THERE ARE MORE OF THEM.

SHOOM

RUN!

SHOOM SHOOM SHOOM

T'CHALLA AWOKE TO DARKNESS.

AND THE SOUND OF THUNDER IN THE DISTANCE.

IT TOOK HIM A MOMENT TO ORIENT HIS BRUISED BRAIN.

HE DIDN'T KNOW HE HAD BEEN STRUCK BY SEVERAL PLASMA BLASTS DIRECTED AT HIS SKULL.

HE ONLY KNEW THAT HE WOULD BE DEAD IF NOT FOR THE PANTHER HABIT.

HIS MEMORIES WERE SOLIDIFYING.

THE CLOAKED PRESENCE IN THE SKY. THE DEAD FLOCK OF BIRDS.

DOOM

THOOM

ONE OF THE LAST THINGS HE HAD DONE BEFORE CLIMBING INTO THE JUNGLE CANOPY TO INVESTIGATE FURTHER...

...WAS HAIL THE DORA MILAJE ON THE COMMS.

OKOYE!

WHAT IN THE NAME OF BAST...?

NOW HIS ENEMY HAD A FACE.

NO, NALA...

THE TECH IN HIS SUIT HAD BEEN COMPROMISED...

...BUT HE DIDN'T NEED HIS COMMS OR MICROPHONES TO HEAR THE SCREAM...

AAIIIEEE!

I'M COMING!

A WIRE MESH NOT ONLY BOUND HER TO THE TREE...

HNNNNGG...

...BUT IT STEADILY TIGHTENED, THREATENING TO CUT THROUGH FLESH AND BONE.

GAAAAA!

HE DIDN'T RECOGNIZE THE SPECIES OR THE TECHNOLOGY OF THIS INVADER...

SLIZ

...BUT HE KNEW THEY COULD BLEED.

HE KNEW VIBRANIUM WAS STRONGER.

WHERE ARE THEY?

THEY ARE NOWHERE, MY KING...

SSHK

...BUT THEY ARE EVERYWHERE.

THE WAKANDAN BORDER.

THERE, MAJI KINA.

WE'RE ALL RIGHT.

BUT I'M NOT CERTAIN I CAN SAY THE SAME OF WAKANDA.

PRINCESS SHURI...WHAT HAS HAPPENED?

SOMEONE ON THE COMMS CRIED OUT FOR HELP.

THD THD

THEN EVERYTHING WENT QUIET.

AND WE WERE LOCKED OUT OF THE PERIMETER SHIELD.

I'M ATTEMPTING TO ACCESS THE CODING... BUT...

...IT'S BEEN OVERRIDDEN BY SOMETHING I DON'T EVEN RECOGNIZE.

HER ATTEMPT TO HACK INTO THE SYSTEM CODING DID NOT GO UNNOTICED.

A SCOUT WAS SENT TO INVESTIGATE THE ATTEMPTED PERIMETER BREACH.

PERHAPS I CAN HELP US UNDERSTAND WHAT IS HAPPENING.

ALL WATER IS CONNECTED TO OTHER WATER.

IT SHARES ITS STORIES WITH ME.

SHURI...

WHAT?

WHAT IS IT YOU SEE, MAJI KINA?

I SEE THE *DEATH OF WAKANDA.*

SHURI HAD WORRIED ABOUT THE RUIN THAT EXISTED OUTSIDE OF WAKANDA...

...BUT THE KINGDOM WAS COLLAPSING FROM THE *INSIDE.*

SOMETHING HAS COME FOR US. A *HORROR* I DON'T RECOGNIZE.

I'LL GET US BACK IN!

I HAVE TO.

HRK!

INSIDE WAKANDA.

THE JUNGLE SEEMED SUDDENLY TO MOVE.

IT WAS AS IF T'CHALLA WAS STARING INTO A REFLECTION OF WIND-BLURRED WATER.

HE RECOGNIZED WHAT HE HAD SUSPECTED BEFORE, WHEN HE SENSED A PRESENCE MOVING THROUGH THE SKY.

THEY WERE FACING AN ENEMY OUTFITTED WITH CLOAKING TECHNOLOGY.

WHAM

AND HE AIMED TO DISABLE IT.

KRK

HE HAD ALWAYS THOUGHT HE WOULD HAVE TO PROTECT WAKANDA FROM THE UNITED STATES, RUSSIA, CHINA--A WORLD POWER.

BUT THIS THREAT CAME FROM BEYOND.

IT WAS A RELIEF TO SEE THAT THIS CREATURE, THOUGH OUTFITTED WITH TECHNOLOGY THAT MIGHT SURPASS EVEN WAKANDA'S...

...WAS STILL SUBJECT TO THE LAWS OF TOOTH AND CLAW.

NOW YOU ARE THE PREY.

T'CHALLA WOULD HAVE PREFERRED TO IMPRISON AND INTERROGATE THIS HUNTER... THIS WARRIOR...THIS *THING.*

BUT THE OLD CROCODILE MIGHT NOT SURVIVE HIS MERCY.

AND THE BLACK PANTHER WAS SWORN TO PROTECT *ALL* OF WAKANDA.

USSHM

SHK

MY KING...

...WHEN THEY ATTACKED...WE FORGOT OUR TRAINING.

EVERYONE SCATTERED.

THERE IS NO TIME FOR REGRET.

WE MUST GATHER AGAIN...

"...THOSE OF US STILL *ALIVE.*"

THE YAUTJA LISTENED, AND HE WATCHED.

THE BLACK PANTHER HAD QUICKLY DISPOSED OF ONE OF HIS CLAN WARRIORS.

AND HE HAD SURVIVED THREE PLASMA BLASTS TO THE HEAD.

HE WAS MORE THAN A WORTHY PREY.

HIS VIBRANIUM-WEAVE SUIT WAS A TROPHY BEYOND IMAGINING.

A VIBRANIUM SPEAR--THE WEAPON HIS BROTHER HAD DEFEATED HIM WITH--HAD STARTED THIS ALL.

NOW HE HAD ONE, AND IT BARELY SEEMED A PRIZE COMPARED TO THE ARSENAL THAT AWAITED HIM.

WHEN A HAIL CAME THROUGH REQUESTING HIS IMMEDIATE PRESENCE...

SKKIGLLELIEM

...HE ABANDONED THIS QUARRY FOR ANOTHER.

FOR NOW.

THE GREAT MOUND.

HE WAS OF TWO WARRING MINDS:

EXCITED BY THE NOVELTY OF THE HUNT...

...WHILE TRYING TO FOCUS ON THE REASON HIS CLAN HAD COME HERE.

VIBRANIUM.

GODMETAL.

THE BELLY OF THE MOUNTAIN WAS FULL OF IT.

A GREED TOOK HOLD OF HIM THEN.

HE IMAGINED ARMOR, WEAPONS, AND WARSHIPS.

HE IMAGINED A THRONE.

HE IMAGINED HIS FATHER AND BROTHER SHAMED AND BLOODIED.

THE PATIENT RECLAMATION OF HIS HONOR WAS BEFORE HIM.

THE BRIEF, VIOLENT PLEASURE OF HUNTING COULD WAIT.

#1 VARIANT BY **EDWIN GALMON** & **FEDERICO BLEE**

LEOKILLA

THE GREAT MOUND. WAKANDA.

THIS WAS POWER.

THE YAUTJA IMAGINED HE COULD FEEL THE ENERGY OF THE VIBRANIUM PULSING DOWN HIS ARM, SLEEVING HIS BONES, ARMORING HIS SKIN.

HE IMAGINED HIS BODY AS THE CENTER OF AN ARSENAL...

...THAT BRISTLED WITH WEAPONS AND TRAVELED IN WARSHIPS.

HE IMAGINED SITTING ON A THRONE OF VIBRANIUM... AS HIS BROTHER'S SKULL DECORATED HIS TROPHY WALL.

HE AND HIS HUNTING PARTY...

...WOULD TAKE EVERYTHING THEY COULD FROM THIS PLACE...

...FROM THE PRECIOUS METAL THAT HID BELOW...

TSSSS

...TO THE PRIZED TROPHIES THAT WANDERED ABOVE.

TSSSS

TSSSS

KRAWWW!

SPLAK

BUT THESE HUNTERS WERE *HUNTED* IN TURN.

OKOYE KNEW THESE JUNGLES AND MOUNTAINS AND SAVANNAS AS SHE KNEW HER OWN BODY...

...AND SHE WOULD FIGHT AND PURGE THESE INVADERS FROM IT AS IF THEY WERE A CANCER.

THREE OF THEM WERE DEAD BY HER SPEAR SO FAR.

KRAII

OKOYE.

BLACK PANTHER-- I WORRIED YOU WERE LOST.

YOU WERE RIGHT TO WORRY.

EACH OF US HAS ALMOST DIED A DOZEN TIMES OVER.

THESE PREDATORS CAUGHT US UNGUARDED BEFORE.

BUT NOW WE KNOW THE FACE OF OUR ENEMY.

WE MUST ***HURRY***, MY KING. BIRNIN ZANA MUST BE UNDER SIEGE.

WE WILL HURRY, AKILI, YES.

BUT LET US BE WISE ABOUT WHERE OUR LEGS CARRY US.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

THEY ARE HUNTERS.

BUT THERE ARE MANY PLACES TO HUNT ON EARTH.

SO WHY COME TO *WAKANDA?* WHAT ELSE MIGHT THEY *COLLECT?*

IT IS AS WE ALWAYS FEARED.

THEY WANT *VIBRANIUM.*

WE MUST GO TO THE GREAT MOUND.

JUST OUTSIDE WAKANDA'S BORDER.

SHURI! WHAT IS HAPPENING?!

WE'RE LOCKED OUT OF THE PERIMETER SHIELD-- HNNGGH-- BUT *THIS THING* ISN'T.

PULL BACK! DRAG IT OUT!

I'M TRYING-- I'M...

HRRK...!

MAJI KINA! NO!

SHK

ALL WATER IS CONNECTED TO OTHER WATER, SHURI.

JUST AS ALL BLOOD IS CONNECTED TO OTHER BLOOD.

GET... BACK...

I WILL SEE YOU AGAIN.

SKELCH

NO!

DAMN-- HRRRR-- YOU.

YOU FIGHT-- HNNGG--LIKE A COWARD!

COME OUT AND FACE ME!

IF YOU NEED TO HIDE TO KILL, THAT MAKES YOU A COWARD!

AND I AM NOT AFRAID OF COWARDS!

I AM SO SORRY, MY FRIEND.

SPLK

"ALL BLOOD IS CONNECTED TO OTHER BLOOD."

SHURI'S COMMS NO LONGER CONNECTED HER TO WAKANDA.

FWISH

FWISH

CHING

BUT THE CHANNELS OF THE OUTSIDE WORLD WERE LISTENING.

SHE DECIDED TO ASK FOR WHAT HER KINGDOM HAD NEVER GIVEN OR REQUIRED.

GA!

SHNK

KLK

WHOEVER MIGHT BE LISTENING.

THIS IS PRINCESS SHURI OF WAKANDA.

WE ARE UNDER ATTACK...

...AND MY NATION NEEDS YOUR HELP!

SOMETIMES, AS KING, IT WAS BETTER TO GUARD YOUR WORDS AND DECISIONS.

THE MORE YOU SHARED OF YOURSELF, THE MORE PEOPLE FELT THEY COULD CLAIM AND QUESTION YOU.

THERE WAS STRENGTH IN SILENCE--JUST AS THERE WAS STRENGTH IN A MASK.

HE NEEDED TO BE SILENT NOW, BECAUSE HE WAS AFRAID.

BECAUSE OF WHAT HE HAD LEARNED...

...WHEN THE YAUTJA STRUCK HIM WITH THEIR SHOULDER CANNONS...

...WHEN HE FELL INTO THE SWAMP AND THE MUD SWALLOWED HIM...

...WHEN DARKNESS CAME...

...AND HE VISITED THE ANCESTRAL PLANE.

T'CHALLA...

GRANDFATHER?

THEY CALLED ME ***AZZURI THE WISE,*** BUT I KNOW THAT THEY USED OTHER WORDS TO DESCRIBE ME AS WELL.

HOSTILE. PARANOID. GUARDED.

THERE WAS GOOD REASON FOR THIS. THE WORLD WAS AT WAR.

BUT THE THREAT CAME FROM MORE THAN NAZI GERMANY.

PEOPLE LOOK UP WHEN THEY SPEAK OF HEAVEN.

BUT HELL CAN COME FROM THE SAME DIRECTION.

WAKANDA HAS FOUGHT THESE ENEMIES BEFORE, GRANDFATHER?

I AM SAD TO SAY YES.

THEY CAME TO HUNT.

BUT THEY STAYED FOR THE VIBRANIUM.

CLOSE TO FIVE HUNDRED OF US DIED BEFORE IT WAS ALL OVER.

WE BURNED THEIR BODIES, BUT WE STUDIED THEIR WEAPONS.

THEIR CLOAKING TECHNOLOGY HELPED INSPIRE THE PERIMETER SHIELD.

AS DID THEIR GREED FOR BLOOD AND VIBRANIUM.

I WAS CALLED AN *ISOLATIONIST,* BUT YOU CAN PERHAPS UNDERSTAND WHY.

I WANTED TO PROTECT MY PEOPLE-- NOT JUST FROM THESE PREDATORS-- BUT FROM *ALL* PREDATORS.

"AND I AM SADDENED TO SAY THAT TASK NOW FALLS TO YOU, GRANDSON.

THE GREAT MOUND.

"IF I AM CERTAIN OF ANYTHING, IT IS THIS:

"THERE WILL BE NOTHING BUT BONES AND ASHES LEFT OF WAKANDA IF THESE PREDATORS HAVE THEIR WAY.

"YOU MUST STOP THEM.

"THE PANTHER MUST *WIN.*"

KRAK

KTCH SHOK CHAK

SHKK

KTAK

THEY CAUGHT US UNAWARE BEFORE.

BUT NOW SURPRISE IS OUR WEAPON.

FOLLOW ME. INTO THE DARK OF THE MINES.

IN HIS HASTE-- HIS *FEAR*--THE KING HAD MADE A MISTAKE.

ONE OF THE GUARDS STILL LIVED.

AND EVEN THOUGH WAKANDA'S COMMS WERE JAMMED...

KT

...THE YAUTJA'S CONNECTION REMAINED LIVE.

KLK KLLK KLLK KLK

THEY KNEW THAT THE BLACK PANTHER WAS COMING.

KLK KLK KLK KLK

AND THEY WERE READY FOR BLOOD.

OUTSIDE WAKANDA'S BORDER.

SHURI HAD WON, BUT BARELY.

SHE FELT NO SATISFACTION IN THE VICTORY...

...KNOWING A LARGER WAR WAS UNDERWAY INSIDE THE WALLS OF HER OWN KINGDOM.

WHAT WERE THEY? HOW MANY OF THEM WERE THERE? FROM WHERE HAD THEY COME?

SHE WOULD NOT STAND BY IDLY.

PSSSH

BAST! YOU'RE AS UGLY AS YOUR SMELL.

SHE RECOGNIZED THE HELMET AS MORE THAN JUST ARMOR.

IT WAS A *COMPUTER.*

IF SHE COULD INTERROGATE ITS INTERFACE, PERHAPS SHE COULD RETURN TO WAKANDA AND MEET THE ENEMY ON ITS OWN TERMS.

BUT FIRST... SOMETHING WAS COMING.

WHAT NOW?

WHO ARE YOU?!

FALCON.

THAT DOESN'T ANSWER MY QUESTION.

CAPTAIN AMERICA SENT ME TO AFRICA TO SHUT DOWN A WEAPONS DEALER.

HAPPENED TO BE WORKING ON SOME RECON A HUNDRED KLICKS NORTHWEST OF HERE.

PICKED UP AN S.O.S. TIED TO THESE COORDINATES? FROM SOMEONE CALLING THEMSELVES PRINCESS SHURI?

BUT YOU...SURE DON'T LOOK LIKE A PRINCESS.

LEDKILLA

THE GREAT MOUND. WAKANDA.

THIS TUNNEL LEADS INTO THE HEART OF THE MINES, WHERE OUR ENEMY IS WAITING...

...BUT WE MUST STOP HERE.

WHAT IS IT, MY KING?

MOVE. INTO THE MAINTENANCE HATCH.

OKOYE... AKILI...DO YOU REMEMBER OUR TRAINING SESSION YESTERDAY?

HOW I PICKED YOU ALL OFF, ONE BY ONE, BY STICKING TO THE SHADOWS?

SOMETIMES, THERE IS STRENGTH IN NUMBERS.

OTHER TIMES, THERE IS WEAKNESS.

I FEAR THIS IS ONE OF THE LATTER.

WE ARE TOO EXPOSED IN THE MAIN TUNNEL.

?

THESE... ***PREDATORS*** HAVE SO FAR BESTED US WITH SURPRISE.

NOW WE WILL USE THE SAME TACTIC AGAINST THEM.

THE MINE IS PIPED THROUGH WITH AIR FOR VENTILATION.

THIS IS HOW WE'LL DESCEND TO THE MAIN LEVEL OF THE MINE.

AKILI, YOU AND YOUR WAR DOG TAKE UP THE REAR.

BUT ONE OF THE WAR DOGS LINGERED IN THE TUNNEL...

BZZZ

AKILI...

...WHERE HE SENSED HE WAS BEING OBSERVED.

AKILI!

WHAT IS THIS? SOME SORT OF DRONE?

BZZZ

I SPIT IN THE EYE OF MY ENEMY!

FWASH

AS THE WAR DOG RUSHED FORWARD, HE TRIGGERED A MINE STATIONED ON THE TUNNEL WALL.

ZEEP

THE LASERS CUT THROUGH HIM AS CLEANLY AS A BLADE THROUGH WATER.

SHK

SHK

SHK

AKILI HAD ALMOST DROPPED INTO THE AIR SHAFT WHEN HE HEARD THE WAR DOG CALLING FOR HIM.

NO!

FWASH

=KOFF= NGGHH.

IT'S OKAY. GO WITH PEACE TO YOUR ANCESTORS...

...KNOWING THAT I WILL *AVENGE* YOUR DEATH.

I WILL *KILL* THEM.

I WILL KILL EVERY *LAST ONE* OF THEM.

I *SWEAR.*

OUTSIDE THE WAKANDAN PERIMETER SHIELD.

SO YOU'RE A PRINCESS? PRINCESS SHURI?

YES.

OF A KINGDOM CALLED WAKANDA?

XI

YES.

THAT'S SOMEHOW KEPT ITSELF HIDDEN FROM THE WORLD? AND OWES ITS WEALTH AND POWER TO ITS VAST STORES OF VIBRANIUM? THE SAME METAL THAT'S IN CAP'S SHIELD?

YES.

AND...YOU'RE CURRENTLY BEING INVADED BY ALIENS?

YES.

I MEAN... THIS WOULD ALL FEEL A LITTLE OUT OF THIS WORLD...

...IF IT WASN'T FOR *THIS* GIANT STINKING PIECE OF UGLY.

YOU SAID YOU NEEDED HELP.

WHAT CAN I DO?

IF YOU COULD SHUT YOUR AMERICAN MOUTH FOR A MINUTE, THAT WOULD BE APPRECIATED.

WHOA! I'M SORRY. AM I DOING THIS WRONG?

WHEN ADDRESSING YOU, DO I NEED TO BOW DOWN AND CALL YOU ***YOUR MAJESTY?***

THAT'S MORE MY BROTHER'S THING.

I JUST NEED TO CONCENTRATE WITHOUT ALL OF YOUR NOISE. SO *SHH.*

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

REMEMBER THE *SHH* PART OF *SHH?*

THEIR TECHNOLOGY HACKED OURS.

SO I'M GOING TO HACK THEIRS RIGHT BACK.

YOU SAID YOUR NAME WAS ***FALCON,*** RIGHT?

DOES THIS MEAN I'M ALLOWED TO TALK AGAIN?

GRAB HOLD OF ME, FALCON.

WHAT?

GRAB HOLD OF ME. BE THE BIG SPOON. NOW.

I CAN ONLY ASSUME THEY'RE MONITORING OUR SECURITY CHANNELS.

IF ONE OF THEM STEPPED *OUT* OF THE SHIELD, THEN "ONE OF THEM" WILL STEP BACK *IN.*

I SEE THAT YOUR SUIT HAS A MAGNETIC DRIVE. I ASSUME THE EMITTER IS CAPABLE OF GPS JAMMING?

I...

BUT WHAT ABOUT HARD-LIGHT CONFIGURATION OF YOUR WINGS? CAN YOU USE THEM TO BLOCK INFRARED TRACKING?

WELL... *UM...YEAH,* ACTUALLY.

GOOD. BECAUSE WE'LL NEED THAT.

WE WILL?

WE WILL.

NOW FLY!

GO. AS QUIET AS MICE.

THMP

AKILI?

THMP

OMP

AKILI!

HE RECOGNIZED THE BODY THAT SLID DOWN THE AIR SHAFT--EVEN IF IT NO LONGER HAD ITS HEAD.

AKILI'S VOICE CALLED OUT TO HIM THEN, BUT IT WAS HOLLOW AND DISEMBODIED--A RECORDING.

"I WILL KILL EVERY LAST ONE OF THEM.

"I SWEAR."

OKOYE! THEY KNOW WE'RE HERE!

CHOOM

CHOOM

THE DORA MILAJE VANISHED IN A RED SPRAY.

OKOYE DIDN'T HAVE TIME TO MOURN.

BECAUSE DEATH WAS COMING FOR HER NEXT.

TRAINING BECAME INSTINCT.

HER BODY DOVE. HER HAND GRIPPED HER SPEAR.

SHE THREW WITHOUT SEEING, ONLY SENSING.

AND HER AIM WAS TRUE.

SHUNK

KAK!

DOWN THE VENTILATION SHAFT CAME AKILI'S KILLER, MOCKING PANTHER WITH THE DEAD MAN'S VOICE.

"I WILL KILL EVERY LAST ONE OF THEM."

WITH THE FORCE OF A CANNON, THEIR BODIES COLLIDED AND SHOT FROM THE SHAFT...

...OUT INTO THE MINE...

...WHERE PANTHER FLIPPED THEIR BODIES IN THE AIR, SO THAT THE PREDATOR'S STRUCK THE STONE FLOOR...

...ABSORBING THE FORCE OF THEIR FALL.

THE MINE SMELLED OF BLOOD AND ECHOED WITH METAL AND SCREAMS.

MORE OF THEM--AND THEN MORE STILL--CAME OUT OF THE DARK.

KINSH

SHOOM

JUST AS OKOYE SWUNG OR DODGED IN ONE DIRECTION...

SHK

...ANOTHER THREAT APPEARED TO THE OTHER SIDE OF HER.

THE PREDATORS WERE BIGGER, AND THE PREDATORS OUTNUMBERED THEM.

BUT THE PANTHER HAD THE STRENGTH OF A NATION IN HIS CLAWS.

KRAWW--

SLASH

THEY'RE HOLDING THEIR POSITIONS.

MAYBE THAT MEANS THEY'RE FINISHED.

OR MAYBE THAT MEANS...

...THEY'RE OBEYING THE COMMANDS OF ANOTHER.

THIS, PANTHER UNDERSTOOD, WAS THE TRUE FIGHT.

THEIR KING.

THE YAUTJA REMOVED HIS HELMET AND REVEALED HIS NAKED HUNGER.

GET BEHIND ME, MY KING.

YOU ARE ALWAYS THERE FOR ME, OKOYE...

...BUT I SENSE THIS MUST BE MY FIGHT.

PLEASE. DON'T TAKE OFF YOUR HABIT.

HONOR DEMANDS IT. LEND ME YOUR STRENGTH BY LENDING ME YOUR SPEAR.

THIS ONE HAS SOMETHING TO PROVE.

AND PERHAPS SO DO I, AFTER BEING BESTED BEFORE.

KRINSH

FACE TO FACE, SKIN TO SKIN, THEY FOUGHT.

THERE WAS MORE THAN A KINGDOM AT STAKE.

THERE WAS PRIDE.

THUD

DO YOU YIELD?!

THE DISGRACE THE YAUTJA HAD FELT HIS ENTIRE LIFE...

...CAME CRASHING DOWN ON HIM THEN.

HE WOULD NOT ALLOW HIS FATHER...

...OR ANY KING...

SLASH

...TO HUMILIATE HIM FURTHER.

SPK

THE YAUTJA DID NOT RUN.

THEY REPOSITIONED.

WITH THE PANTHER GRIEVIOUSLY WOUNDED, THE YAUTJA ORDERED HIS SOLDIERS BACK TO THEIR SHIP.

MY KING...

THEY HAD THE VIBRANIUM THEY CAME FOR...

...AND THEY WOULD RETURN TO THIS BATTLE AT A LATER DATE--STRONGER THAN BEFORE.

WAKANDA HAD FLOURISHED IN ISOLATION.

THEY HAD NEITHER OFFERED HELP TO THE WORLD, NOR ASKED FOR IT.

BUT THAT POLICY HAD ABRUPTLY CHANGED.

THEY HAD MADE ENEMIES.

BUT SO HAD THEY MADE ALLIES.

CHAK

SHHHK

SHURI DIDN'T KNOW WHETHER HER BROTHER WAS ALIVE OR DEAD.

AND SHE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT SORT OF RUIN AWAITED HER BELOW.

SHE ONLY KNEW THAT THE ALIEN VESSEL HAD LAUNCHED OFF THE GREAT MOUND...

...WHICH SEEMED A CLEAR INDICATION OF A HEIST.

A VIBRANIUM HEIST.

BUDA BUDDA

SHE AND FALCON WERE THE LAST LINE OF DEFENSE.

ZEEP ZEEP

BUDDA BUDDA

FALCON!

I'M SORRY, SHURI.

I COULDN'T STOP THEM.

WE WERE TOO LATE.

ACTUALLY...

"...WE WERE JUST IN TIME."

BEEP BEEP BEEP

THE YAUTJA COULD NOT HELP HIMSELF.

IN THE RECKLESS HEAT OF HIS ESCAPE, HE BLASTED OUT A MESSAGE...

...WARNING HIS BROTHER THAT HE WAS COMING HOME TO WIN BACK HIS HONOR...

...WITH GODMETAL...

...AND WITH *BLOOD.*

NOTHING SURVIVED THE BLAST BUT THE VIBRANIUM...

...AND THE GREED IT ORIGINALLY INSPIRED.

THE PREDATOR KING AND HIS FAVORED SON TRACKED THE MESSAGE OF WARNING SENT THEIR WAY.

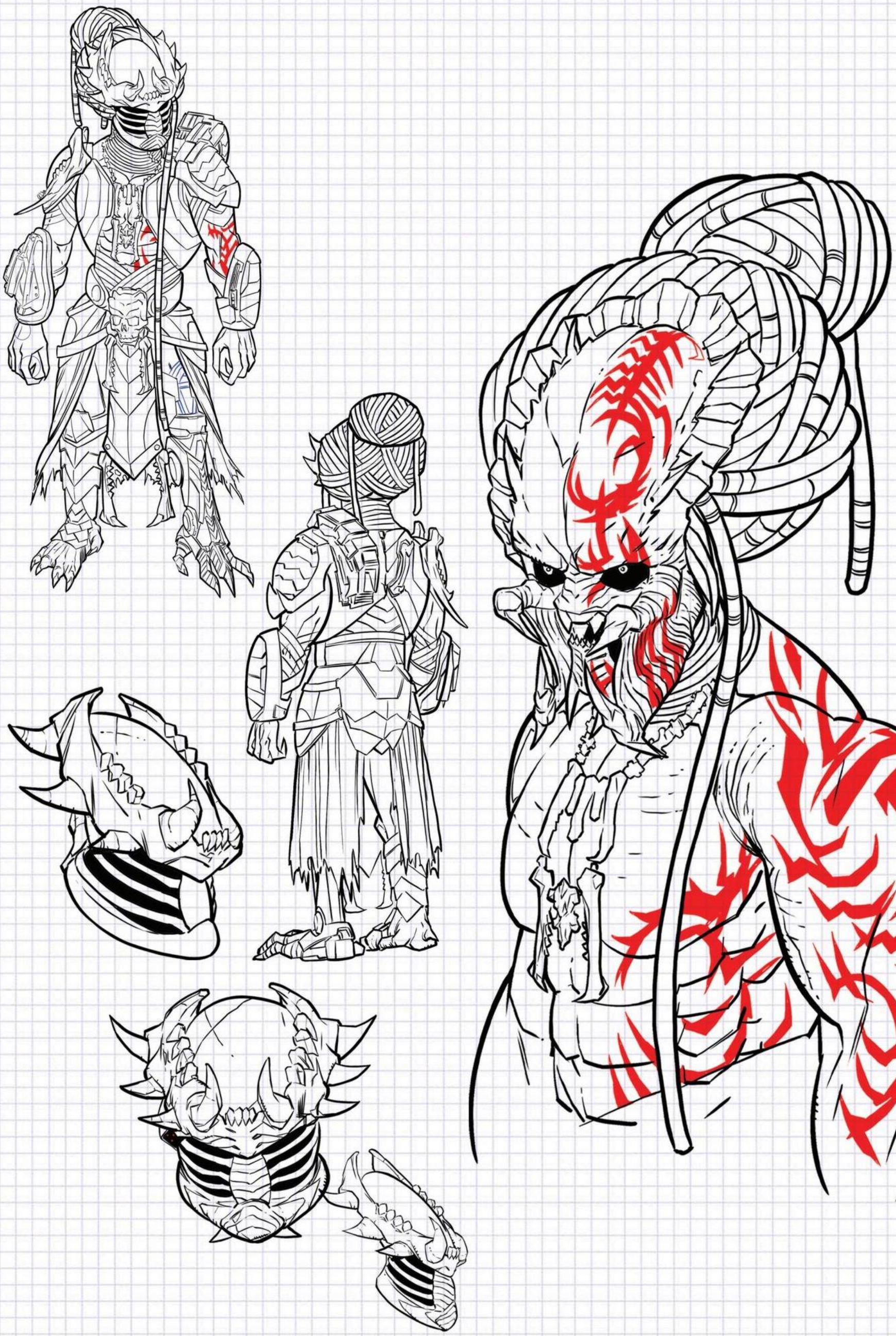
WHAT THEY FOUND CLAIMED THEIR FULL ATTENTION.

GODMETAL, THEY CALLED IT.

THERE WAS ENOUGH TO DEVELOP AND ADVANCE THEIR ARSENAL INTO ONE THAT WOULD RIVAL ANY IN THE COSMOS...

...INCLUDING EARTH'S.

THE END... FOR NOW!



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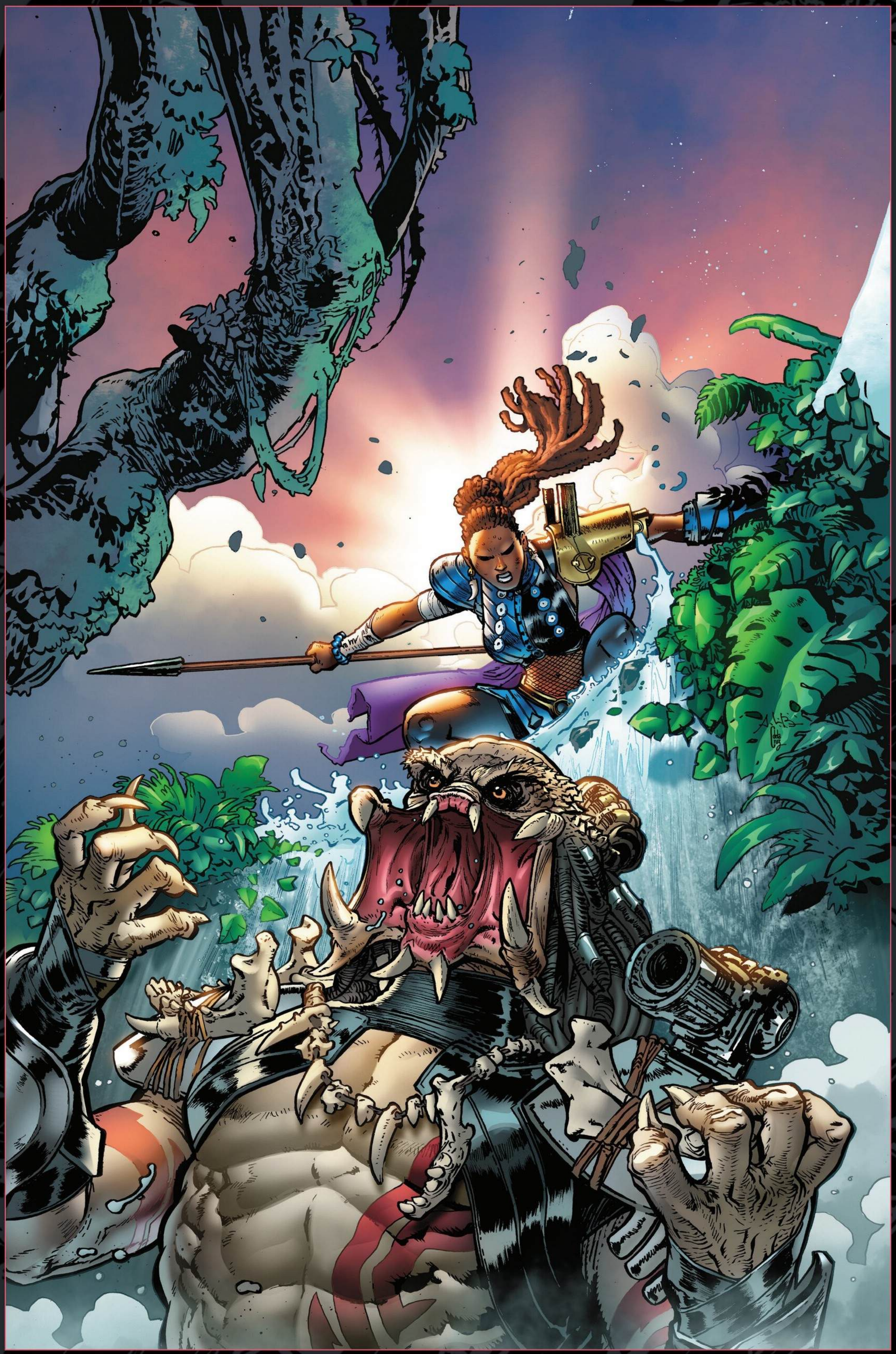

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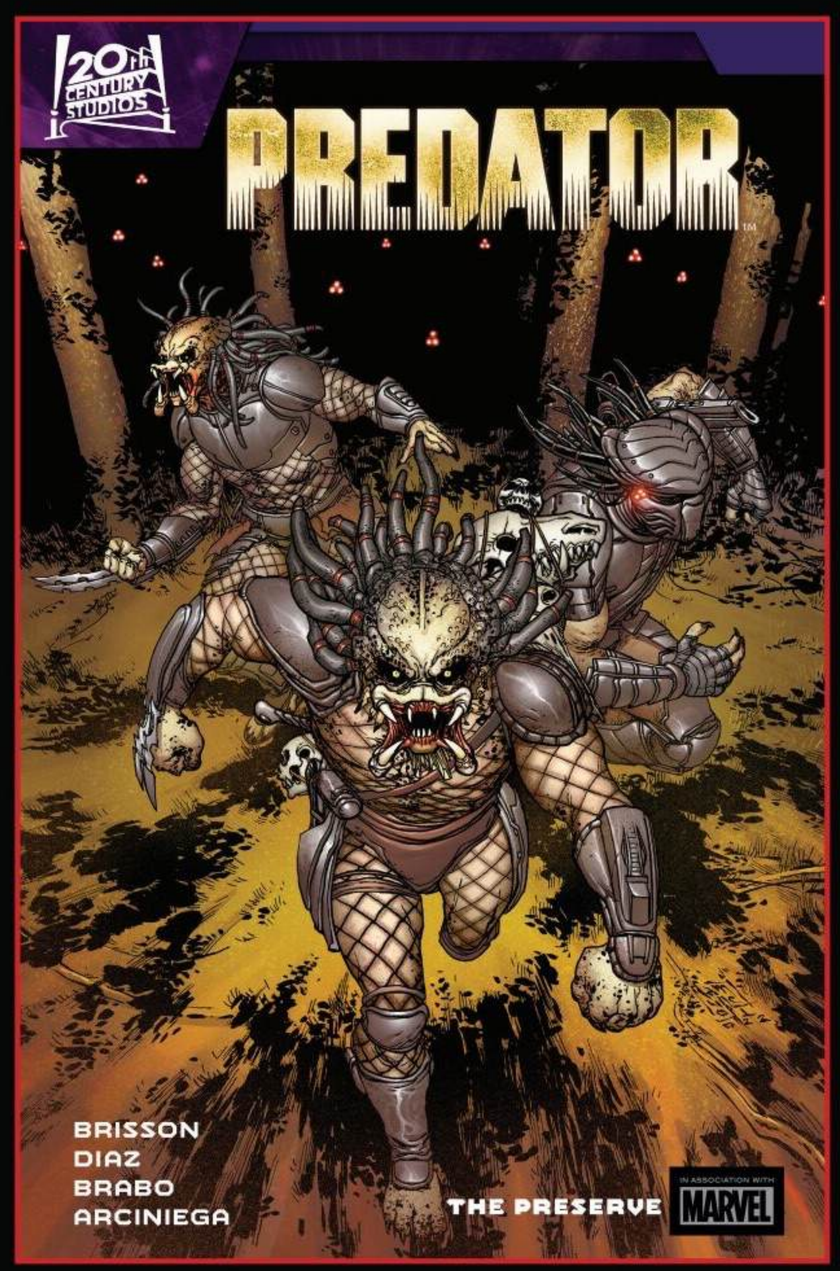

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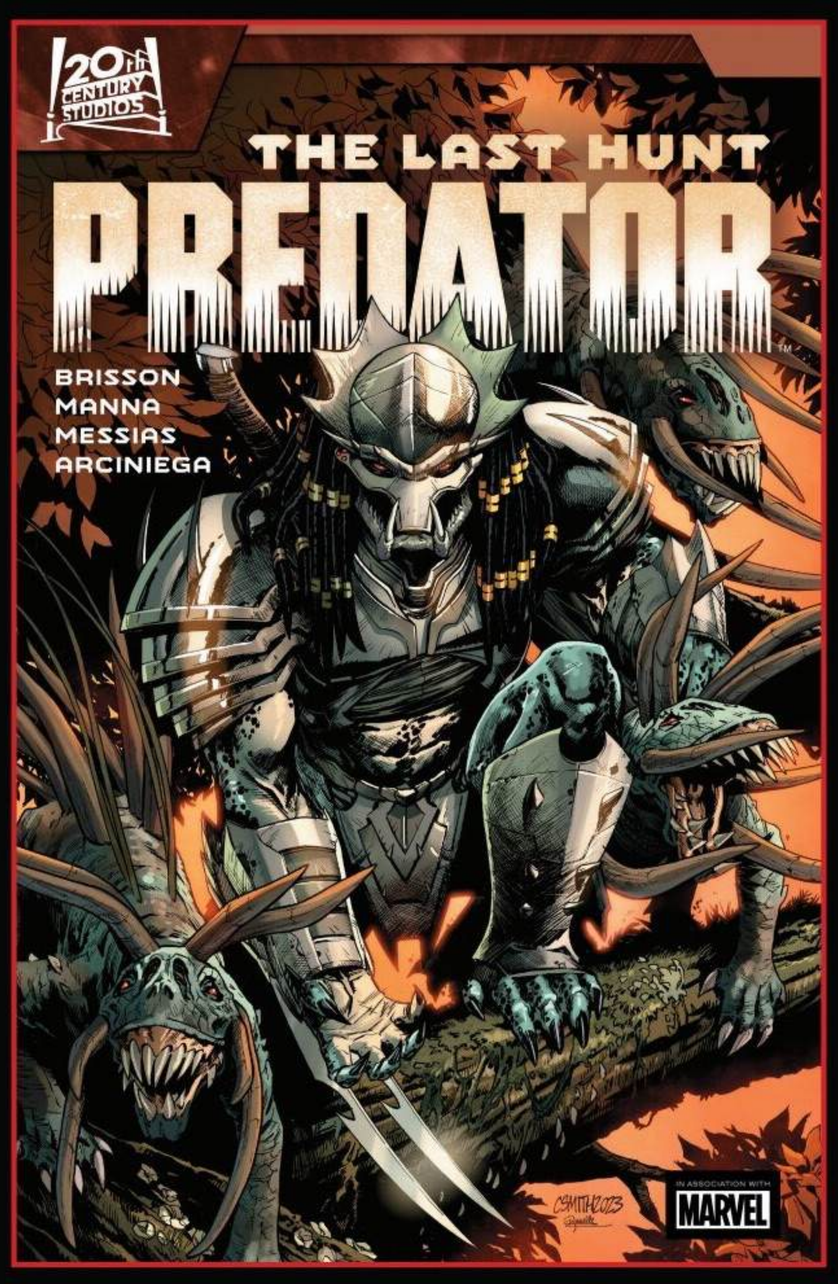

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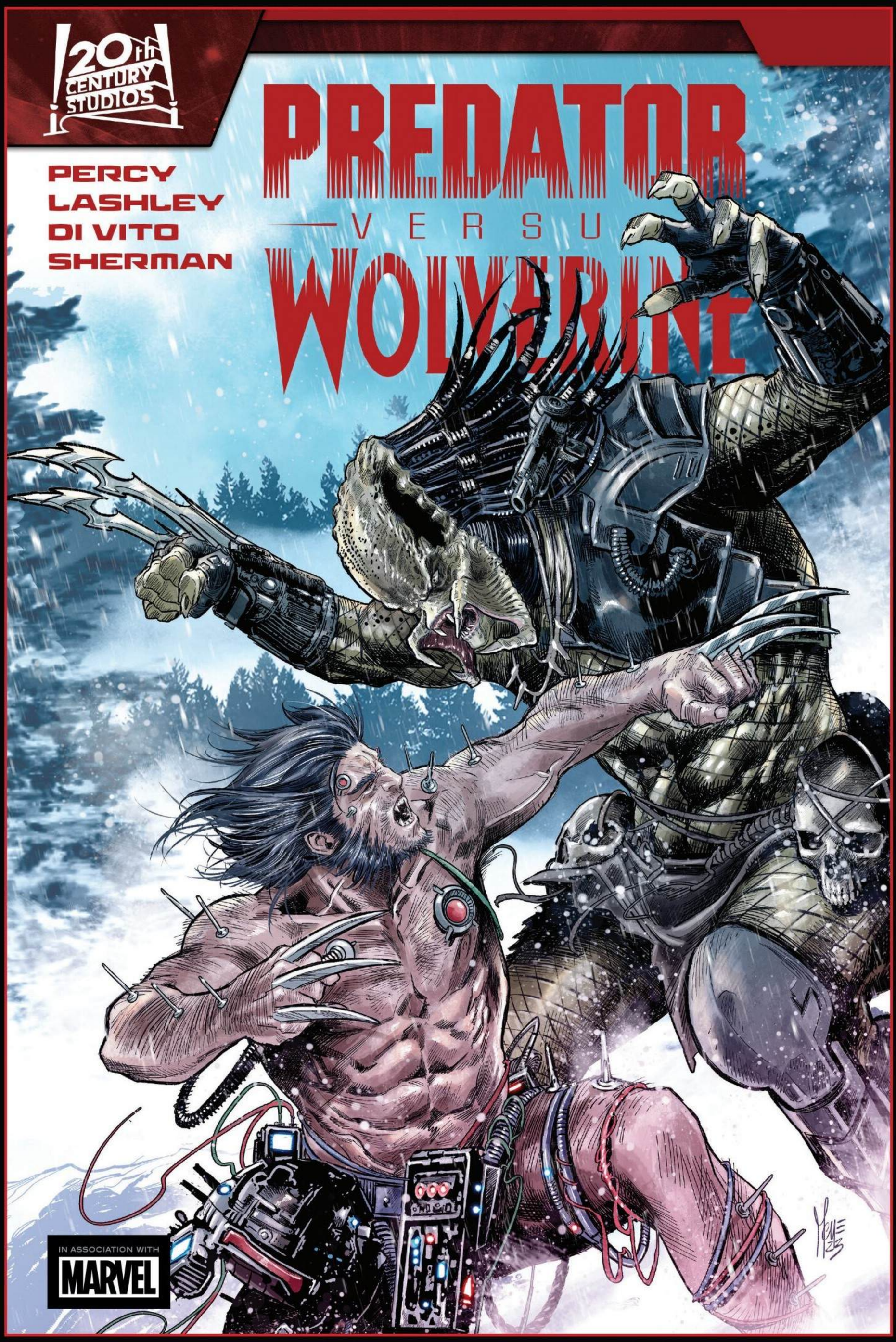

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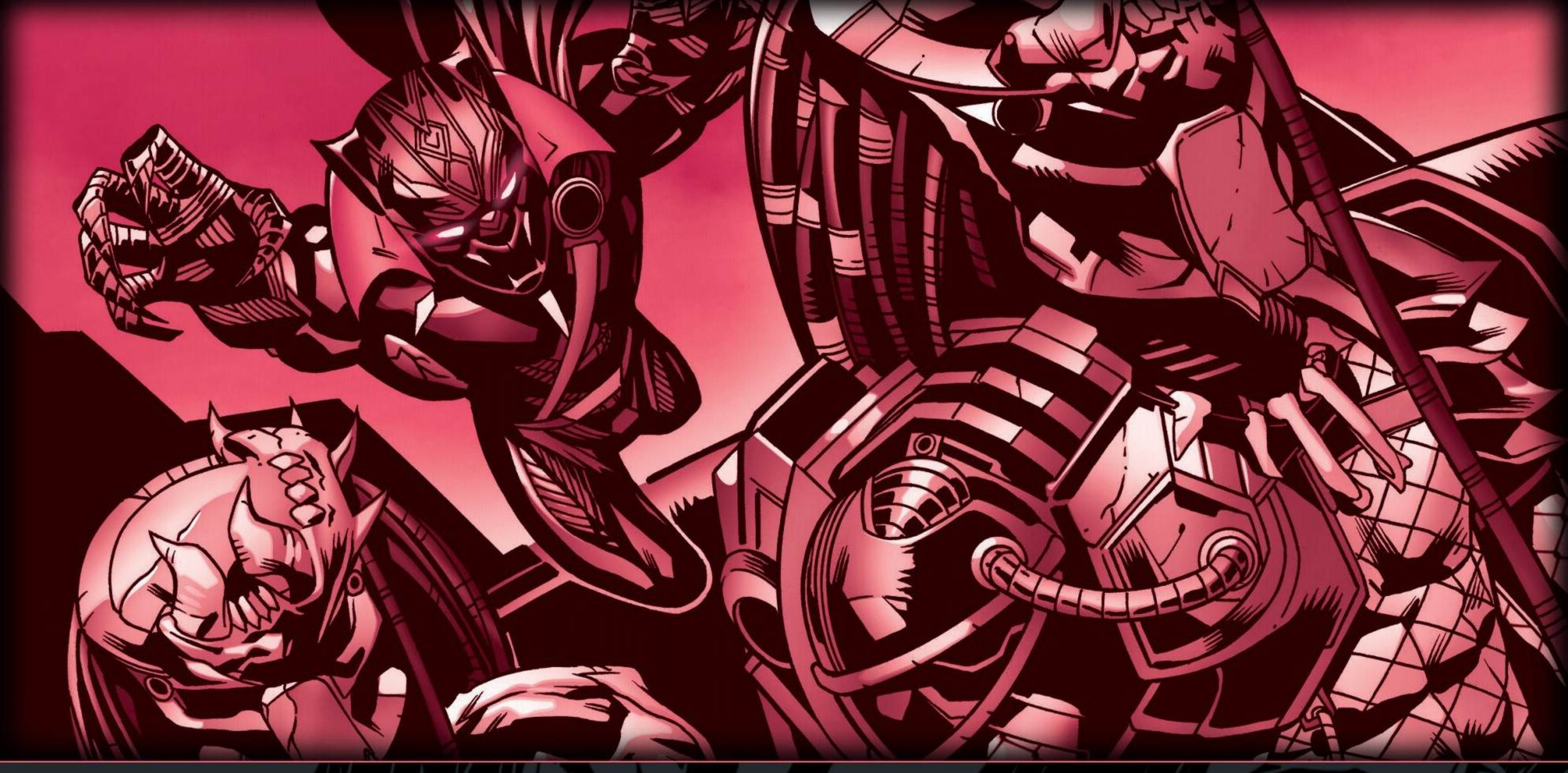

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